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THE EFFECTS OF THE STRIKES ON MILITARY ABILITY  
AND PROBLEMS OF THE DRV IN REPLACEMENT

11 August 1965

Assessment of effects of US airstrikes on DRV military installation systems during July 1965.

1. (S) Naval Bases:

a. Two naval bases previously hit are given below:

(1) Phuc Loi Naval Base (Tgt #71.7) - not hit since 21 May. 42% of base destroyed. No evidence of reconstruction to date.

(2) Quang Khe Naval Base (Tgt #74A) - Cumulative damage to this installation was 47% destroyed as of 28 May. Repairs to the T-head pier and Marine Railway have been noted; however, the target was struck on 31 July. No BDA is available as yet.

b. Assessment: It is estimated that these installations can still provide service and support for NVN naval units however at a reduced level.

2. (S) Supply Depots:

a. No supply depots were hit during July. Present level of destruction at supply depots hit to date is as follows:

<u>Tgt</u>	<u>Last Hit</u>	<u>Cumulative Damage</u>
(1) Vinh Army Supply Depot E (Tgt 52)	10 June	15% storage capacity destroyed
(2) Phu Van Supply Depot (Tgt 53)	26 May	86% storage capacity destroyed
(3) Thien Linh Dong Warehouse (Tgt 54)	13 June	58% storage capacity destroyed
(4) Vinh Son Supply Depot (Tgt 55)	23 June	14% storage capacity destroyed
(5) Dong Thanh Warehouse Area (Tgt 63.2)	22 June	54% storage capacity destroyed

b. Assessment.

(1) It is possible that limited operations could be resumed at Tgt #52 and Tgt #63.2; however, extensive repair and new construction would be required to restore Tgts #43, #54, and #55 usefulness. There is no evidence that restoration is being attempted.

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(2) Damage levels are not believed to have reached the point where serious equipment and supply shortages exist; however, the strikes are most likely causing an increasingly disruptive effect on the supply system. It is possible that supplies have dispersed to smaller, less conspicuous locations in wooded areas, caves or possibly in civilian buildings.

### 3. (S) Ammunition Depots:

#### a. Ammunition depots hit to date:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>LAST HIT</u>	<u>EST PRE-STRIKE CAP</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE RESULTS</u>	<u>EST PRESENT CAP</u>
(1) Phu Qui Ammo Depot (Tgt 40)	4 June	9,000	54% storage cap destroyed	4140 Mt
(2) Phu Van Ammo Depot (Tgt 41)	16 July	3,800	54% storage cap destroyed	1748 Mt
(3) Qui Hau Ammo Depot W (Tgt 43)	8 July	11,500	32% storage cap destroyed	7820 Mt
(4) Ban Phiang Hay Ammo Depot (Tgt 46)	25 June	1,500	43% storage cap dismantled prior to strike 7% of remaining destroyed	795 Mt
(5) Yen Son Ord & Ammo Depot (Tgt 47)	20 July	10,000	37% storage cap destroyed	6300 Mt
(6) Hoai An Ammo Depot (Tgt 47.11)	1 June	8,236	61% storage cap destroyed	3212 Mt
(7) Tai Xouan Ammo Depot (Tgt 47.13)	24 July	7,700	BDA not completed	
(8) Xom Rung Ammo Depot (Tgt 47.18)	3 July	4,120	9% of storage cap destroyed 4 May, 31 July BDA not completed	3749 Mt as of 4 May
(9) Ban Nuoc Chieuammo (Tgt 47.19)	23 July	11,900	22% storage cap destroyed	1250 Mt
(10) Xom Bang Ammo Depot (Tgt 64)	2 Mar	5,000	75% storage cap destroyed	1250 Mt

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b. Assessment.

(1) No effort to restore or repair any of the above depots has been noted to date. Some appear run-down and show little sign of use. Secondary explosions have been noted at only two of the depots. In view of the above, it is considered likely that NVN ammunition stores have been dispersed to avoid the effects of the bombings. Well camouflaged areas in wooded areas and caves would be the most likely new locations.

(2) It does not appear that an ammunition shortage exists in the DRV to date; however, deliveries are probably being delayed.

4. POL Storage:

a. Strikes against POL targets during the month of July consisted of raids on the 2nd and the 4th against the Nam Dinh Petroleum Products storage depot. Of the 7 vertical and 4 horizontal tanks in place at the time, all but one vertical tank were severely damaged or destroyed. The one tank remaining has probably been rendered inoperable though an accurate assessment is not yet possible.

b. Assessment.

(1) Destruction of the Nam Dinh facility eliminates the last major bulk storage facility south of Haiphong and removes a significant trans-shipment point connecting the southern provinces with the north.

(2) Attacks on POL facilities to date have reduced national capacity for POL storage by 12,000 metric tons, or approximately 7 percent, leaving about 155,000 metric tons of storage capacity still available for use.

(3) DRV and Pathet Lao forces will be forced to rely on packaged stocks carried over greatly extended supply lines. Limited storage remains at several points along the coast, primarily to support DRV naval activities, but is not sufficient to supply inland requirements. The increased use of small horizontal tanks may occur if such are available, but no major restoration of damaged facilities is anticipated. North Vietnam is not known to be manufacturing tank components, steel tubing, piping, pumps, or other items basic to the construction or maintenance of POL storage facilities. Although prefabricated tanks of Soviet design can be installed on a prepared site in about a week, it is unlikely that either the Soviets or the Chinese could provide all the necessary elements in less than 4 weeks.

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5. (S) Barracks

a. Barracks hit to date:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>LAST DATE HIT</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE DAMAGE</u>
(1) Chanh Hoa Barracks (Tgt 24)	11 Feb 1965	55% total floor space plan destroyed
(2) Son La Barracks, Hqs MR IV & Supply Depot (Tgt 25)	15 July 65	46% of Bks & 32% of storage cap destroyed
(3) Dien Bien Phu A Bks & Hqs 316th (Tgt 26)	29 July 65	20% of total floor space plan destroyed as of 22 July. BDA not completed for 29 July strike
(4) Ban Xom Lom Bks & Hqs 335 Bde (Tgt 28)	21 July 65	34% of total floor space plan destroyed
(5) Quang Suoi A Bks (Tgt 29)	29 July 65	32% total floor space plan destroyed as of 24 Jul. BDA not completed for 29 July strike.
(6) Vu Con Army Bks (Tgt 32)	23 May 65	83% total floor space plan destroyed
(7) Dong Hoi A Bks WNW (Tgt 33)	7 Feb 65	Mostly dismantled. Dumping ground for Rt 24 & 25
(8) Vit Thu Lu Army Bks (Tgt 36)	31 May 65	14% total floor space plan destroyed
(9) Moc Chau Army Bks (Tgt 37)	23 June 65	26% total floor space plan destroyed.

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<u>NAME</u>	<u>LAST DATE HIT</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE DAMAGE</u>
(10) Vinh Army Bks Central NE (Tgt 38)	31 July 65	7% total floor space plan destroyed as of 10 June. BDA for 31 July strike not com- pleted.
(11) Chap Le Army Bks (Tgt 39)	10 June 65	36% total floor space plan destroyed
(12) Ban Quang A Bks SW (Tgt 39.1)	5 July 65	69% total floor space plan destroyed
(13) Vinh Linh A Bks Central NE (Tgt 39.2)	5 July 65	28% total floor space plan destroyed
(14) Quan Lan Army Bks (Tgt 39.4)	25 May 65	30% total floor space plan destroyed
(15) Xom Trung Hoa Bks (Tgt 39.5)	8 May 65	70% total floor space plan destroyed
(16) Vinh Linh Army Bks E. Lien Cong (Tgt 39.7)	9 May 65	51% total floor space plan destroyed
(17) Vinh Linh Army Bks NW Xom Cho (Tgt 39.8)	5 July 65	87% total floor space plan destroyed
(18) Xom Y Lanh A Bks (Tgt 39.9)	17 June 65	36% total floor space plan destroyed
(19) Hoan Lao Army Bks S (Tgt 39.11)	19 May 65	41% total floor space plan destroyed
(20) Dong Hai Bks Citadel (Tgt 39.12)	21 June 65	25% total floor space plan destroyed
(21) Phu Le Army Bks (Tgt 39.13)	21 May 65	34% total floor space plan destroyed
(22) Badon Army Bks (Tgt 39.14)	17 June 65	30% total floor space plan destroyed
(23) Hou Luat Nam Army Bks (Tgt 39.15)	29 June 65	58% total floor space plan destroyed
(24) Don Bai Dinh Mil Camp (Tgt 39.17)	14 Apr 65	71% total floor space plan destroyed

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<u>NAME</u>	<u>LAST DATE HIT</u>	<u>CUMULATIVE DAMAGE</u>
(25) Muong Sen Mil Camp (Tgt #39.18)	12 June 65	72% total floor space plan destroyed
(26) Yen Phu Army Bks NE (Tgt #39.21)	21 June 65	36% total floor space plan destroyed as of 17 June. BDA for 21 June not completed.
(27) Thanh Hoa Army Bks S (Tgt #39.22)	8 July 65	28% total floor space plan destroyed
(28) Thanh Hoa Bks SSE (Tgt #39.23)	15 June 65	34% total floor space plan destroyed
(29) Sam Son A Bks W (Tgt #39.24)	16 June 65	18% total floor space plan destroyed
(30) Vinh Son A Bks S (Tgt #39.25)	19 July 65	52% total floor space plan destroyed
(31) Dong Cau Than A Bks (Tgt #39.26)	22 July 65	65% total floor space plan destroyed
(32) Bai Thuong Army Bks NE (Tgt #39.28)	31 Jul 65	BDA not completed
(33) Phu Qui A Bks (Tgt #56)	22 June 65	55% total floor space plan destroyed
(34) Thuan Chau Bks (Tgt #63)	30 June 65	26% total floor space plan destroyed

b. Assessment: Although damage to these installations has been extensive in some instances, loss of barracks and support buildings in themselves does not pose any major problem for the DRV. Adequate civilian structure are available for billeting troops and storing military supplies. The advantage to be derived from these strikes would seem to be psychological, that is, damage to morale and corresponding effect on the will to fight. There is little evidence of any effort being exerted to rebuild or repair damaged facilities. In most cases, damaged buildings are being dismantled.

6. (S) Airfields:

a. <u>NAME</u>	<u>LAST DATE HIT</u>	<u>RESULTS</u>
(1) Na San Airfield (Tgt #1)	25 June 65	19% of building destroyed - 10 craters in runway
(2) Dien Bien Phu Airfield (Tgt #2)	8 July 65	72% of building destroyed - 15 craters in runway
(3) Dong Hoi Airfield (Tgt #4)	1 July 65	30% of building destroyed - 12 craters in runway

<u>NAME</u>	<u>LAST DATE HIT</u>	<u>RESULTS</u>
(4) Vinh Airfield (Tgt #5)	1 July 65	10% of building destroyed 14 craters in runway.

b. Assessment: To date the airfields at Vinh, Dong Hoi, Na San and Dien Bien Phu are not being utilized by DRV aircraft. The reactivation of airfields (Bac Kan and Lang Son), in the northern portion of the DRV, coupled with a revetment and airfield improvement program has given the DRV more flexibility in dispersing their aircraft over a less concentrated area. The current number of airfields presently being utilized is nine (Bac Mai, Gia Lam, Lang Son, Phuc Yen, Kep, Kep Ha, Cat Bi, Kien An and Bac Kan).

#### 7. (S) Radar System:

a. No JCS targeted radar sites were scheduled for strikes during July. In the course of armed, route reconnaissance, however, a number of JCS targeted and other radar sites were actually struck by ROLLING THUNDER aircraft. The following listing was prepared from reports submitted by individual pilots:

	<u>Strikes</u>
Hon Matt Island Radar	11
Cap Mui Ron Radar	6
Quang Khe Radar	3
Hon Nicu Radar	3
Vinh Son Radar	3
Cua Lo Radar	2
Hon Ma Radar	2
Cap Falaise Radar	2
Muy Duc, Ya Tinh & Vinh Linh	1 each
Unidentified/un-named sites	11

b. Assessment: Actual damage assessment of these 46 radar strikes has not been made with any degree of accuracy since BDA of post-strike, visual or photographic coverage, is not regularly performed for armed recce targets. The pilot reports of damage extend from "unknown", thru "moderate damage" and "on target" to "target destroyed".

#### 8. (S) Armed Recce:

a. As of 30 July, 3,989 armed recce sorties have been flown.

<u>Tgt</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Results</u> <u>Damaged</u>
Vessels	209	361
Vehicles	170	223
RR Stock	102	314

b. During the period 25 June to 22 July 1965 pilots reported sighting more than 151 railroad cars, destroying 32, and damaging 73. Incorporating these results with those of previous months it is estimated that armed route

reconnaissance missions conducted through 22 July 1965 have resulted in the destruction of 2 locomotives and 110 railroad cars and damage to 3 locomotives and 264 railroad cars. Numerous successful strikes have been made on small railroad bridges and yards both north and south of Vinh.

c. Equipment and Personnel: No assessment of equipment losses can be made other than that shown above. The loss of major items of equipment will pose some problems for DRV since it depends almost exclusively upon aid from the Communist countries. Additional aid has been promised and evidence indicates that it is presently arriving in country. Immediate replacement for items destroyed by airstrikes may be accomplished by moving similar items down from the north pending receipt of new equipment from outside the country.

#### 9. (S) Surface LOC Targets:

a. Four railroad/highway (10, 14, 18.6 and 18.8) and two railroad (18.5 and 18.7) bridges located north of Vinh have been hit and extensive damage done to each. This probably has caused delay in the delivery of military supplies to Vinh and certainly has placed an additional burden on the transportation system. It is estimated that these six will have a serious over-all effect on the military capabilities of the DRV south of Hanoi. One railroad/highway (18.51) and one railroad (18.69) bridge located south of Vinh have been hit and extensive damage done to both. These bridges are on a section of the inoperable Vinh-Dong Hoi rail line that is being rehabilitated. They were used as actual or alternate highway crossings.

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The Yen Bay Railroad Yard [ ] has been bombed several times. The yard has been extensively cratered and several associated buildings including the passenger station have been destroyed. The railroad line between Hanoi and Lao Cai has been cut in several places and at least two small bridges, north of Yen Bay, have been destroyed. Damage to this rail line has disrupted China rail traffic as well as traffic between Hanoi and Lao Cai (and Yunnan Province, China).

North of Vinh two railroad/highway (14 and 18.8) and one railroad (18.7) bridges are being reconstructed; 18.8 to carry both vehicular and rail traffic, 14 to carry vehicular traffic and 18.7 to carry pedestrian traffic only. At 18.7 a ferry and a ford under construction have been reported. After extensive restoration 18.8 has been restruck and redestroyed. Ferries are suspected to be serviceable at three railroad/highway bridges (18.6, 18.8 and 14). Light capacity float bridges have been observed, completed and assembled near 18.8 and partially assembled on both banks near 14. The reconstruction work on 18.44 has been damaged by armed recon strikes.

There have been no apparent repairs to one rail bridge (18.5) nor has a ford or ferry been observed there. South of Vinh, repairs have been observed on one railroad/highway bridge (18.51) but none on railroad bridge (18.60). The former may be served by a ferry and there is a ford north of the latter (between it and highway bridge 18.15). Restrikes at 18.51 have severely damaged the reconstruction work and destroyed two additional spans. With the exception of 18.11, all principal interdicted highway bridges have been bypassed by alternate lower capacity facilities including ferries.



b. Assessment: All primary routes and principal secondary roads in the highway system south of the 20th parallel and routes 1A, 10, 6 and 19 north of the 20th parallel have sustained severe damage or loss of one or more critical bridges, with somewhat less effective damage to the targeted ferry crossing sites. As a result of strikes on a total of 67 LOC targets, 60 bridge crossings including 8 served by rail and combination rail/highway structures, have been interdicted with effective results. Alternate crossings or bypasses are now available for most of those bridges struck. Bypasses particularly on Routes 1A, 7, and 15 have been detected as being placed in intensive service. (There are several firm indications of development of new alternate bypass routes paralleling or connecting major LOC routes).

After an initial delay of periods up to one week, recovery of interdicted crossings has been undertaken in most cases by the steady and deliberate construction or rehabilitation of alternate facilities in the form of fords, ferry sites, and causeways.

With the continuation of the interdiction program, recovery operations have been undertaken more immediately than in the early weeks, such as at the Quang Khe ferry ramp which was repaired within five days of interdiction. During the month of June, evidence was obtained of the growing use of low capacity float bridges as supplemental water crossings at interdicted sites. Float bridges of a uniform design have been discovered in place or under assembly at Thanh Hoa, Dong Phong Thuong, and Phu Qui. A light capacity floating bridge of cruder design has also appeared at Phuoc Cau

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Reconnaissance has verified the continued use of truck movement on the LOC system and a sizeable truck inventory of more than 300 is estimated in use to stage supplies forward in successive shuttles not only between interdicted crossings but also between well spaced supply staging areas. Despite the employment of such a system, the bottlenecks developed by the interdiction program and the known restriction of traffic to night movement have caused a marked reduction in the capable rate of movement of supplies to forces in the south. With the relatively small amounts currently required by the PAVN, PL and VC forces, the reduced capacity still exceeds the daily tonnages required to support these troops.

#### 10. (S) Explosives Plants:

The Lang-chi Explosives Plant was bombed on 24 July 1965 and, according to open sources, suffered moderate damage. No post-strike photography is available as yet; therefore, no assessment of bomb damage can be made.

The Lang-chi facility is the only known plant in North Vietnam which produces explosives. Based on an analysis of earlier photography -- the only information available on this installation -- it has been estimated that the plant produces only commercial explosives. If this evaluation is correct any damage suffered by the plant will have no direct effect on DRV military capabilities.

11. (S) It is felt that the capability of the armed forces of DRV to perform its mission of (1) defense of the homeland, (2) to provide training for its own forces and for infiltration forces for SVN and Laos, and (3) to provide logistic support for its own forces and the Communist forces of SVN and Laos at the present level of activity, has not been effected to any appreciable degree. The reduction of road capacity due to attacks of LOC targets in the southern part of the country has however, limited the ability of DRV to support any major offensive beyond its own borders into Laos or SVN.

EFFECTS OF THE AIR STRIKES ON THE ECONOMY

1. (S) The economic effects of air strikes are largely those resulting from destroyed or damaged rail/highway bridges, damage to three or four electric power plants & economic disruptions caused by preparations for possible air raids. Movement of commodities between the southern and northern portions of North Vietnam has been disrupted. The bulk of the traffic was by railway, but a considerable portion of the tonnage transported between the two areas moves by coastal ships.
2. (U) The southern part of the country is of minor economic importance -- most of the country's industry and more than 80 percent of its cultivated land are in the north. The southern half produces primarily lumber and some rice. Economic traffic moving south to Vinh has included coal, petroleum, corn, fertilizer, steel products, and construction materials. Lumber and logs are the primary items moved north.
3. (C) The volume of freight carried on the Thanh Hoa-Vinh rail lines was on the order of 440 short tons each way per day, or less than five percent of the total tons carried by the entire railway system of North Vietnam.
4. (S) The Nam Dinh Thermal Powerplant was attacked on 28 and 29 July, with pilot reports indicating damage to 25 percent of the target. However, a full evaluation of the nature of the damage to the plant must await the receipt of photography. Excluding the Nam Dinh plant, three electric power plants, comprising about 9 percent of total national generating capacity, have now been rendered inoperable and will probably require at least 12-18 months for restoration. The largest of the plants, the Ben Thuy Thermal Powerplant, supported a local isolated transmission network which serviced the Ben Thuy-Vinh area, including a shipyard, port facilities, and small industrial installations. The second largest plant, at Thanh Hoa, supplied about 60 percent of the electric power available in Thanh Hoa and the adjacent Nam Rong. Industrial facilities affected by the loss of power are phosphate plants and rice processing plants. The third plant, a small generating facility at Co Dinh, was the sole source of supply of power for a large chromite mine and associated processing facilities.
5. (S) The air strikes against petroleum storage facilities have had little effect on the North Vietnamese economy. Total petroleum storage in the country is exceptionally large in relation to normal consumption and some tankage may not be in regular use. However, some diversion of road and inland waterway transportation is required to compensate for the loss of bulk stocks in the southern regions.
6. (S) Through rail traffic between Hanoi and points south of Song Day at Ninh Binh has been eliminated. The railroad affected has estimated maximum capacities of 2,900 short tons per day between Hanoi and Thanh Hoa and 1,500 short tons per day between Thanh Hoa and Vinh. ~~If temporary or semi-permanent reconstruction~~ to permit through rail movement ~~is intended~~ on all of the damaged combination railroad/highway, ~~and~~ pre-strike capacity. It is estimated that by use of emergency measures at all damaged rail and combination rail/highway bridges such as pontoon bridging over or ferry facilities, the interrupted rail lines could be restored to move 700 short tons per day after 7-10

days. Permanent replacement or reconstruction to pre-strike status of the railroad and combination railroad/highway bridges would take from 6-18 months for each individual bridge.

25X1 The Hanoi-Lao Cai rail line has been cut in several places resulting in the disruption of China to China rail traffic (via Hanoi) and rail movement between Hanoi and Yunnan Province, China. This 184 route-mile railroad had an estimated maximum capacity of 2,600 short tons per day. It is estimated that, by use of emergency measures at all damaged rail sections, the Yen Bay Rail Yard [ ] and at two destroyed minor bridges, the interdicted rail line could be restored to move 500-700 short tons per day after 7-10 days (assuming no further attacks).

7. (S) Of the 64 targets forming part of the highway LOC system, 12 of these targets are ferry crossings which have received only minor damage, and three are bridges with minor damage. The remaining 52 bridge crossings had an original total length of over 12,931 feet. An approximate 5,958 feet of this total has been taken out by the air bombing. This amounts to a sizeable replacement requirement and would constitute a heavy burden on the resources and economy of the country if quick restoration were to be undertaken. Reconstruction efforts on bridges on Routes 1A, 7, and 15 have been detected as well as supplemental low capacity float bridge bypass facilities on routes 1A and 15.

8. (S) The character of the DRV reaction appears to be slow but deliberate with stress on development of hard-to-block ferry crossings. These, in turn should not prove too difficult or expensive to install. Actual restoration of the interdicted bridges has been very limited to date but of permanent nature. Late photography reveals a general trend to restore or maintain through traffic service by means of ferry bypasses. The majority of these crossings had previous (inactive) ferrying facilities. Ferry ramps were noted on pre-strike photography in various stages of alteration and with no standby barge or power equipment. Renovation of ferry ramps was delayed for several days after the commencement of the interdiction program and progress was slow even after work was started. Work on restoration of more recently interdicted bridge indicates a possible speedup in recovery efforts. Preparation of alternate ferry crossing facilities on those bridges on Route 1A still intact emphasizes the importance to the DRV of maintaining through traffic on this main LOC. Use of standard military pontoon equipment at Ly Nhan (JCS 18.47) further emphasizes the importance of this route since such bridging materials are relatively scarce and generally thought to be kept in reserve for tactical operations.

9. (S) Not to be ignored is the possible augmentation of the movement of tonnage by increased use of coastal vessels. Considerable traffic in the area affected by the strikes already moves by sea. The port Ben Thuy near Vinh has a normal capacity of 600 short tons which was believed to be fully utilized. Under emergency, this capacity could be doubled and further supplemented by the use of small craft and barges. Use of these alternate facilities would permit military shipments to continue as well as civil goods but at some economic cost. On 5, 6, and 8 June however, Ben Thuy port facilities (71) were subjected to air strikes. As a result of these strikes, the bulks of two sunken merchant coasters now block a portion of the main wharf face. The estimated

military port capacity of Ben Thuy which was originally 600 long tons per day is now estimated to be reduced to 300 long tons per day. On 21 July the port of Ben Thuy was struck again with the resulting destruction of 2 buildings and damage to 4 other buildings.

10. (S) The cost of permanent reconstruction of the rail/highway bridges would be on the order of 6.5 to 7 million dollars, exclusive of transportation and labor costs, for the electric power plants over 2 million dollars, and for the petroleum storage facilities about 500,000 dollars. These are considerable costs for North Vietnam, especially since the steel for bridge and petroleum tank reconstruction, and most of the equipment for the restoration of power generating capacity must be obtained from foreign sources, such as Communist China and the Soviet Union.

11. (S) The economic effects of the bombing have been minor in relation to total economic activity in North Vietnam. The combined effects of transportation difficulties, loss of electric power, and disruption caused by actual or anticipated air strikes have probably reduced the rate of total output of the country (GNP) by only a few percentage points. The country is barely self-sufficient in food, industrial output is small, and there are ambitious plans for economic expansion. There are strains in all elements of the economy and any disruptions add to the serious problems faced by the regime.

12. (S) Viewed from the outside the economic effects of the air strikes do not seem to amount to much. However, Hanoi probably has a different view. The damaged and destroyed bridges and power plants represent years of construction work which was made possible only with foreign assistance. Costs of reconstruction of the bridges, power plants, and POL storage facilities, will represent about five percent of total annual investment. In the past the regime which has promised better things to the populace, has encountered a series of disappointments, and the air strikes have added to the Communist leaders' problems.

An Evaluation of the Influence of the Strikes  
on the Political Attitudes of the DRV

During July, statements by DRV leaders and articles in the official press indicate that the government of North Vietnam considers that the continued US/GVN air strikes require gearing the North Vietnamese people for a long war and an increased production effort. The DRV White Book, published 10 July, states that by "recklessly stepping up" the war in the North, the "US imperialists" are angering "all" Vietnamese people, who become more resolved to "hit hard and accurately at the enemy until final victory." In mid-July an article by Defense Minister General Vo Nguyen Giap in the Communist Party theoretical journal, Hoc Tap, repeated this theme and added "we need to make every preparation to prepare to defeat the US aggressors in case they expand their war to the whole of our country." (General Giap had also stressed this theme in an interview in Cairo earlier in the month as well as the familiar theme that the cessation of the US bombing of North Vietnam was one of the prerequisites for any negotiations to settle the Vietnamese situation). On 25 July the Hanoi daily, Nhan Dan, carried an editorial on the occasion of the DRV's shooting down the "400th" US plane over North Vietnamese territory. In this Nhan Dan claimed, "We have been fighting well and at the same time carrying out our production tasks well. All branches of the economy are developing at an accelerated pace and are meeting the requirements of the war, of the development of the economy and of the peoples' life."

Additional government propaganda efforts include a continuing attempt to convince the North Vietnamese populace that US aircraft are not aiming at military targets but at the civilian population (e.g. strafing hospitals and dwellings).

Thus, during July there was no indication that the US/GVN air strikes had brought the government of the DRV any closer to a decision to negotiate an end to hostilities in Vietnam. On the contrary, the DRV seems prepared to continue the conflict.